

Re-Appraised Mining Claims May Increase County Coffers

by Tom Noffsinger

Wasatch County may receive increased tax revenues from mining claim lands if the State Tax Commission is successful in re appraising such lands. Tax Commission representative Jerry Frazier met with the Wasatch County Board of Commissioners Monday to outline the reappraisal plan and request the county's help.

Frazier said values for mining claim lands are currently set at \$50 per acre, but the tax commission hopes to establish a fair market value. A potential boost to the Wasatch County general fund if lands net a higher value due to recreational opportunities.

County Recorder/Surveyor Liz Parcell said there are between 1,500 and 2,000 mining claims in the county, most averaging 20 acres in size. She added it will take three to six months of full time work to establish the properties and develop legal descriptions. The state wants the work has to be finished by Jan. 1, 1996. The commissioners asked Ms. Parcell to come up with a proposal to staff her office to assist the tax commission with the reappraisal.

County Public Works Director Kent Berg introduced Tom Bonner to the commission as the county's new parks and recreation director. "It's going to be fun," said Bonner of the new position. Bonner is currently employed at The Homestead

Resort in Midway.

County Attorney Dan Matthews reported a contract with Duchesne County to purchase a share of the Bluebench landfill is nearing completion. Matthews also informed the board preparations are underway for

forming a county-wide special service district to fund a recreation director and related facilities.

Commission Chairman T. LaRen Provost said he is somewhat against the proposed district, since the

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county already has an annual budget of \$125,000 for recreation and he does not want to burden the taxpayers with additional charges.

Matthews said the commission would have the decision whether to impose a tax, an authority they already possess as commissioners. Provost said he would like to see the district used as a managing agent, but not for tax collection.

The board then authorized a resolution giving notice of intent to form a special service district for parks and recreation. A public hearing was set for July 10 at 10:30 a.m. to take public comments on the issue.

Dale Berg met with the commission to request an extension to allow construction improvements in the Big Pole Estates development without posting a bond. The board approved the request. County ordi-

nance requires developers to post a bond if construction is not completed within six months; but extreme weather prompted Berg to request the additional time.

A public hearing was held to consider a zone change request to extend the commercial zone to 7.5 acres along Industrial Parkway and Highway 189. The board approved the request, noting no public opposition was voiced.

Kent Buie met with the board to request an extension of approval for Wild Mare Farms in Plat A2. The board approved extending the approval for six months.

Engineering Coordinator LeeRoy Farrell and Jordanelle Technical Advisory Committee representative Alane Boyd met with the board to review the JTAC water quality contract. The contract will be placed on next week's agenda for final consideration.

Scott Jager met with the board to discuss the Utah Open Lands Foundation; formerly the Summit Land Trust. Apparently the representative from Utah Open Lands was unable to attend the meeting. Jager said he would try to reschedule the presentation.

Brent Hilliar, president of Intermountain Health Administrators, met with the commission to discuss the county's insurance coverage. Hilliar provided a summary sheet of the county's past health insurance plans with his company. Hilliar said the county's plan has saved over one million dollars in the past four years, compared with the previous insurance carrier.

Hilliar apparently does not feel the county's insurance review committee established by the commission has given adequate consideration to his company's plan and history. The committee was set up to take bids from insurance carriers in an effort to reduce health insurance costs.

Hilliar's program is a partially self-funded plan and he argued that comparison between a fully insured and partially insured plans is not fair. "I don't believe the committee fully understands partially self-funded programs," said Hilliar, who requested time to further explain the concept.

He maintained his company

deserves better treatment from the county than being asked to provide a bid, "we have saved the county over a million dollars," added Hilliar. "We have been good to this county... and we have a program that works." He added the county's costs have actually reduced over the past several years.

"I don't think you're in line at all," said Commissioner Sharron Winterton after Hilliar's voice rose and an argument was started with a county employee. Winterton sat on the insurance review committee.

"I have never been in a situation where we have performed like this and been treated this way," responded Hilliar. "I don't think there is an open mind here," he added.

The board said the committee has the decision authority and asked Hilliar to meet with the committee if he has concerns about his company's proposal.

Sheriff Mike Spanos met with the board to update the commissioners on several matters. He informed the group the bailiff contract with the state has been increased \$2,500 over last year's contract, up to \$8,500 for 1996. In 1995 the contract amount was \$3,500. The board approved the contract.

Spanos also presented a contract from the state prison system to keep inmates sentenced to state prison, when the state prisons are at capacity. According to Spanos, if the state reaches capacity the prisons have to release inmates. The contract allows the county to keep its state-sentenced prisoners until a parole date allows the state to accept more prisoners.

In other matters the board: approved the minutes of the May 22 meeting; approved several business licenses; approved a zone change request from Edson Packer; granted a probationary raise for Paul Wilson; denied a previous request from Kent Huff to allow building permits in Timberlakes before the corrective action rating for the water system is issued; approved a contract to apply for water quality funds to extend groundwater studies in the county and denied a request to waive fees and charges for property tax.

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Governments, a traffic count on the
county's east side is planned to
determine the impact the Center
Creek and Lake Creek areas have
on Heber's Main Street.

The countywide roads committee
is scheduled to meet tonight
(Wednesday) at 8:00 pm to further
discuss the matter.

Heber Olympic Flag Relay Planned

The Utah Olympic Flag Relay
will come through Heber City
Monday afternoon. The event is
planned to collect Olympic flags
from across the state as part of the
Lake City Olympic Bid cele-
bration next week. The International
Olympic Committee is expected to
announce the host city for the 2002
Olympics on Friday, June 16 at
11:20 a.m.

Flags collected during the relay
will be displayed in a parade and
a lighting event on the evening
of Thursday, June 15.

Representatives of Heber City's
City Council will be partici-
pating in the parade and displaying
the community flag from the relay.

Monday afternoon at 2 p.m. at
Heber City Office Building the
council will make a short pre-
sentation to the flag relay team from
Mountain Fuel, as the relay contin-
ues toward Salt Lake City. The pub-
lic is invited to attend the cere-
mony, both in Heber City and Salt
Lake City. For more information on
Salt Lake events schedule, call
579-TIPS